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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 SANAA 003168

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/28/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [ODIP](#) [ER](#) [ET](#) [SU](#) [YM](#)

SUBJECT: SALEH PLAYING HOA STATESMAN, WANTS USG STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

REF: A. STATE 271223

[1](#)B. SANAA 3153

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Nabeel Khoury for reasons 1.4 b and d.

[1](#)1. (U) This is an action request. See paragraph 5.

[1](#)2. (C) Summary. Immediately following his return from the Sanaa Forum for Cooperation in Khartoum, Foreign Minister Qirbi convoked Charge on December 28 to ask for U.S. political support for a number of initiatives endorsed by the participants, Yemen, Eritrea and Sudan. The FM singled out three agenda items: Saleh's proposal for an Ethiopian-Eritrean dialogue, Sudanese President Bashir's promise to abide by the cease-fire in Darfur, and the intention of Somali President Abdullahi Yousef Ahmed to move his government to Mogadishu in the near future, possibly with African Union and Arab League support. End Summary.

WE DESERVE DIPLOMATIC RECOGNITION AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

[1](#)3. (C) FM Qirbi convoked Charge the morning after his and President Saleh's return from the third meeting of the Sanaa Forum for Cooperation (a.k.a. Sanaa Gathering) held in Khartoum December 26-27. The meeting was hosted by Sudanese President Bashir and attended by Ethiopian PM Zenawi and President Saleh; Somali President Yousef Ahmed and Arab League Secretary General Amr Musa were present as "guests." Qirbi handed Charge the summit's joint communique, pointing to three items he believes merit a U.S. statement of support:

--Sudanese President Bashir's reaffirmation of GOS commitments to conclude a peace agreement and facilitate access of AU, UN and NGO humanitarian relief personnel to Darfur;

--President Saleh's proposal to establish a formal Ethiopia-Eritrea dialogue to resolve the border dispute and normalize relations between the two nations (and Saleh's offer to help extend the same formula and act as mediator to resolve disputes between Sudan and Eritrea; and

--Somali President Yousuf Ahmed's plans to move his government to the capital of Mogadishu as early as next month.

SOMALIA AND SUDAN

[1](#)4. (C) Qirbi also noted that Yousef Ahmed had expressed a desire to join the gathering and that Yemen, Eritrea and Sudan invited Somalia to join the sub-regional group, pending approval by the Somali Parliament. In response to the FM's request for a public statement of US support for the forum, and for Yemen's efforts as founder and likely driving force behind several of the initiatives, Charge said we would explore the idea of a statement, but noted that the USG continues to have serious concerns about security in Mogadishu and the readiness of other parties to accept the new government without the eruption of violence. As for Sudan's promise to honor the time table for a peace the peace agreement and facilitate the access of international relief agencies to alleviate the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur -- the GOS has repeatedly failed to honor such pledges -- the time is now, Charge told Qirbi, for Sudan to live up to its commitments with concrete actions on the ground. (Comment: Saleh received ref A demarche points before leaving for Khartoum and may be seeking credit from USG for inclusion of the Bashir commitments in the joint communique. End Comment.)

[1](#)5. (C) Qirbi passed a copy of the summit's joint communique. In addition to the three items listed above, the members of the gathering condemned terrorism and affirmed their commitment to cooperate in the GWOT, expressed satisfaction with the conclusion of the Somali peace process and called on the international community to commit funds to enable the interim government to establish its authority in Somalia, called for a resumption of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, and reaffirmed members support for an independent democratic Iraq and the role of the UN in reconstruction.

16. (C) Comment and Action Request. Saleh's contributions to the summit, particularly his proposals for a formal dialogue between Eritrea and Ethiopia and between Eritrea and Sudan to resolve outstanding disputes, come as no surprise. Saleh has been looking for opportunities to wear the hat of regional statesmen, beginning with his Sea Island attendance and efforts to play a lead role in the region on BMENA reform. The ROYG is also seriously concerned the impact of prolonged instability in Somalia on Yemen's own stability. Post requests department guidance on: A) whether or not a general statement of support for the Sanaa Forum's work in Khartoum (and kudos to Yemen as a primary diplomatic force behind it) is appropriate at this time; and B) how USG might react to an AU-Arab League supported move by Yousef to Mogadishu. End Comment and Action Request.

KRAJESKI